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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7833  
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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: PRESIDENT BUSH'S MIDDLE EAST VISIT; SAO  
PAULO

"Bush's Useless Middle East Visit"

Business-oriented daily Valor Economico editorialized (1/18):  
"President Bush's eight-day visit to the Middle East began with  
speeches about peace and democracy and ended with the sale of an  
arms package totaling USD 50 billion.... In his last year in the  
white House, Bush does not have any power in the Congress and can do  
little to repair his lack of action and clear support for Israel,  
which were evident in the past seven years.... New developments  
towards peace in the region will probably take place after the U.S.  
elections. The permanence of weak and cornered governments both on  
the Israeli and Palestinian sides is a major obstacle preventing the  
negotiations from advancing, not to mention the US's lack of  
interest in forcing Israel to make concessions."  
White